

India gears up for mass motoring revolution

Level 2 • Intermediate

1 Key words

Fill the gaps in the sentences using these key words from the text.

boot vehicle rival boom consumer
smog emission evict nightmare switch

1. If you _____ someone, you force them by law to leave their home or their land.
2. An _____ is a substance, particularly a gas, that goes into the air.
3. A _____ is an extremely difficult or frightening situation or a very bad dream.
4. A _____ is a machine that you travel in on a road, such as a car, a bus or a motorcycle.
5. The _____ of a car is the space, usually at the back, where you place your luggage.
6. If you _____, you change from one thing to another.
7. A _____ is a sudden major increase in the activity of a particular industry.
8. A _____ is someone who buys and uses goods and services.
9. A _____ is a person or business that competes with another.
10. _____ is polluted air that is a mixture of smoke and fog.

2 Find the information

Look in the text and find this information as quickly as possible.

1. What is the population of India?
2. What is the currency of India?
3. How much will the Nano car cost?
4. How many people per thousand people in India have a car?
5. How much carbon dioxide did cars in India produce in 2005?
6. How many cars will the Tata factory be able to produce each year?

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India gears up for mass motoring revolution with £1,260 car

Environmentalists fear city smog nightmare if millions of Tata's Nanos hit the road.

Randeep Ramesh in New Delhi
January 11, 2008

- 1 It has no radio, no boot, no airbag, no passenger-side mirror and just one long windscreen wiper. And if you want air-conditioning to deal with India's summer heat you'll have to buy the deluxe version. India's Tata Group has just announced the world's cheapest car, the Nano, which will go on sale later this year for 100,000 rupees (£1,260) to bring motoring to the country's billion inhabitants. 70-year-old Ratan Tata, the chairman of Tata, believes that the Nano is as important an event in the history of transport as the first powered flight by the Wright brothers, or the first landing on the moon. But environmentalists say the new car could cause a 'nightmare' of terrible pollution and blocked roads.
- 2 Like a modern-day version of Henry Ford, Tata's idea is of a cheap car that is light and simple, but made from high-quality materials. The result is a small vehicle which can just hold five adults. The cheapest model is very basic: its price has been kept low by using more plastic than steel, and using glue to hold the parts together. Rival manufacturers had questioned whether the car would meet safety standards, especially if the company plans to export such models to Europe. Tata officials said the car had been designed so it could be easily strengthened with metal plates to meet tougher safety standards.
- 3 First designed four years ago, the Nano has already revolutionized the motor industry. Just a few days before Tata showed the car to the public for the first time, Ford announced it would increase spending by \$500m (£250m) a year to make India a centre of 'small-car manufacturing'. Last October, Renault said it was considering making a \$5,000 car in India for export to the US. For the time being the Nano will only be on sale in India and analysts predict that India will become the fastest growing car market – overtaking China – in five years.
- 4 The 'people's car' is also a realization of the Tata chairman's dream: to put every Indian family in a car. He says the thought came to him first while watching families on motorbikes travelling through dusty streets: "The father driving the scooter, his young kid standing in front of him, his wife seated behind him holding a baby. I wondered whether there could be a safe, cheap, all-weather form of transport for such a family."
- 5 The Nano costs just 100,000 rupees plus sales tax and is less than half the price of the next cheapest car on the road in India and a bit more than a quality motorcycle. Analysts say that the economic boom in India means that people with money will want to buy cars instead of motorcycles. If just 10% of motorcycle owners switched to the Nano it would mean 1m extra cars on India's roads a year.
- 6 "Tata have been very clever and have studied the market very carefully," said motor industry expert Abdul Majeed. "The Nano is like Ford's Model T which drove the American motor boom in the early 20th century. Tata will give the Indian consumer a cheap car that is easy to drive and cheap to maintain. The market possibilities are huge."
- 7 But environmentalists say the possibility of mass sales of the Nano could cause enormous damage to the environment. India's largest cities are now covered in smog and rush hours last long into the night. In Delhi traffic now crawls, on average, at less than nine miles an hour – half the speed of ten years ago. As traffic jams increase and cars slow down, the emissions of greenhouse gases increase more rapidly. India's vehicles produced 219m tonnes of carbon dioxide in 2005. Experts say that will increase by almost 700% to 1,470 tonnes by 2035 if car travel is not restricted.
- 8 "In terms of emission controls, we are five to 10 years behind Europe. We do not tax diesel

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properly so more dirty car use is encouraged,” said Sunita Narain of Delhi’s Centre for Science and Environment. “We need better public transport, not policies that promote private cars, otherwise we will not meet people’s needs.”

- 9 The motor industry says that Indian car ownership is still small: seven or eight out of every 1,000 people own a car, compared with more than 500 in every 1,000 in America. The number of private cars in India – about 13m – is only a little more than half the number of cars in America at the start of the 1930s. But the boom in motoring in India is already changing the shape of the country. Slowly cities are being replaced by distant suburbs. The government is spending £35bn on new road projects. Farmland has been given to industry for the factories to build new cars.

- 10 In the case of Tata’s new car, more than 1,000 acres of fields in West Bengal’s Singur district were taken to build the Nano plant. The factory will be able to produce 250,000 cars a year. Thousands of farmers who once grew four crops a year have been evicted to make way for the new factory. Last month Shankar Patra, a 50-year-old farmer who lost his fields to the Tata plant, killed himself. “Without our fields there is no work for us. The village will die,” said Patra’s 22-year-old son, Pratap. “We have nothing, but the rest of India will have a new car.”

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3 Comprehension check

Are these statements **True (T)** or **False (F)** according to the text?

1. There were more cars in America in the 1930s than there are in India today.
2. Ford and Renault are also planning to make cars in India.
3. The chairman of Tata wants everyone in India to own a car.
4. The next cheapest car in India costs 200,000 rupees.
5. In Delhi traffic moves faster than it did 10 years ago.
6. There are around 13 million private cars in India.
7. The Indian government does not want to spend money on new roads.
8. The Tata factory has been built on farmland.

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4 Vocabulary 1: Find the word

Find the following words and expressions in the text.

1. A noun meaning *someone who wants to protect the environment*. (para 1)
2. A comparative adjective meaning *more difficult and stricter*. (para 2)
3. A verb meaning *say what will happen in the future*. (para 3)
4. A noun meaning *a small vehicle that looks like a motorcycle with a small engine*. (para 4)
5. A two-word expression meaning *extra money you have to pay when you buy something*. (para 5)
6. A verb meaning *to keep in a good working condition*. (para 6)
7. A two-word expression meaning *the time of day when there are a lot of cars on the road because people are going to or from work*. (para 7)
8. A verb meaning *to encourage or support something*. (para 8)

5 Vocabulary 2: Collocations

Match the words in the left-hand column with those in the right-hand column to make two-word expressions from the text.

- | | |
|---------------|--------------|
| 1. high | a. gases |
| 2. public | b. boom |
| 3. safety | c. wiper |
| 4. rush | d. tax |
| 5. sales | e. quality |
| 6. economic | f. hour |
| 7. greenhouse | g. transport |
| 8. windscreen | h. standards |

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6 Vocabulary 3: Word building

Complete the table using words from the text.

verb	noun
1. pollute	
2.	revolution
3. realize	
4. consume	
5. emit	
6.	encouragement
7. own	
8.	eviction

7 Discussion

Does everyone have the right to own a car? How can we protect the environment if road and air travel becomes even cheaper?

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KEY

1 Key words

1. evict
2. emission
3. nightmare
4. vehicle
5. boot
6. switch
7. boom
6. consumer
9. rival
10. smog

2 Find the information

1. One billion
2. The rupee
3. 100,000 rupees (£1,260)
4. Seven or eight per thousand
5. 219 million tonnes
6. 250,000

3 Comprehension check

1. T
2. T
3. F
4. F
5. F
6. T
7. F
8. T

4 Vocabulary 1: Find the word

1. environmentalist
2. tougher
3. predict
4. scooter
5. sales tax
6. maintain
7. rush hour
8. promote

5 Vocabulary 2: Collocations

1. e
2. g
3. h
4. f
5. d
6. b
7. a
8. c

6 Vocabulary 3: Word building

1. pollution
2. revolutionize
3. realization
4. consumer
5. emission
6. encourage
7. ownership
8. evict